TRUANCY INTERVENTION

The process of education requires continuity of instruction, class participation and study. Frequent absences from classes disrupt the instructional process. Success in school is dependent upon good attendance and school attendance is the responsibility of a parent or legal guardian. Therefore, schools shall make every effort to encourage regular attendance for all students and to help parents in their responsibility to have their children attend school.

1.1 Truancy Intervention Programs

The North Star Academy Truancy Intervention Program has been established to encourage good attendance and to facilitate the processing of chronically truant students through the juvenile court. Those efforts shall include documented earnest and persistent efforts to resolve a student's attendance problems as follows:

- 1.1.1 Annual notification of the school attendance policies shall be provided to the parent/guardian(s) of all students at the time of registration.
- 1.1.2 Following two (2) unexcused absences in a six (6) week period, the individual designated by the school shall counsel the parent/guardians(s) and student as to the importance of school attendance and the legal implications of truancy. Documentation of the date, time, and method of communication shall be kept. It is expected that a least one (1) truancy citation shall be issued to the student during this period of time.
- 1.1.3 Following four (4) additional unexcused or six (6) excused absences in a subsequent six (6) week period, the individual designated by the school shall contact the parent/guardian(s) and arrange for a meeting to discuss the student's attendance problem. Documentation of the date, time, and location of the meeting shall be kept. A second truancy citation may be issued during this period of time.
- 1.1.4 Following the seventh (7) unexcused absence within a total twelve (12) week period, a certified letter shall be sent requesting again the support of the parent/guardian(s) in resolving the attendance problems and outlining Utah State Law 53A-11-103. A copy of the letter and mailing certificates must be kept by the school. A second truancy citation may be issued during this time.
- 1.1.5 If there is an eighth (8) unexcused absence within a total fourteen (14) week period, and a second truancy citation has not been issued, one shall be issued at that time and the student shall be referred to Administrative Student Services/Principal for further action.
- 1.1.6 Following the second truancy citation, prior to referral to court, in a final attempt to prevent habitual truancy, Administrative Student Services/Principal shall schedule a pre-court hearing meeting with the parent/guardian and student and present final alternatives to a court referral.
- 1.1.7 Following the ninth (9) unexcused absence within a total eighteen (18) week period, a third truancy citation shall be issued and the school shall refer the student to Administrative Student Services/Principal.
- 1.1.8 Any student having received three (3) prior truancy citations within a single school year and for whom reasonable efforts to resolve the attendance problem have failed, shall be issued a habitual truancy citation and referred to the juvenile court as a habitual truant by Administrative Student Services/Principal.
- 1.1.9 A court referral shall include a recommended disposition containing the following:
- [a] documentation of attendance and academic achievement;
- [b] documentation of school efforts to improve attendance;
- [c] copies of truancy citations, including all mailing certificates; and
- [d] student background as requested by the prosecuting agency.

1.2 Truancy Citations

Earnest and persistent efforts to resolve student attendance problems may include the issuance of a truancy citation which requires:

- 1.2.1 Consultation with a parent/guardian to determine if mitigating circumstances such as medical or psychological problems indicate the use of intervention methods other than assessing fees for resolving the attendance problems.
- 1.2.2 Notification of the student and a parent/ guardian of the truancy fee schedule and action by the school should the student be truant in the future.
- 1.2.3 Copies of truancy citations shall be retained in the student's permanent record.
- 1.2.4 If a student enters or leaves the school, truancy citations issued may follow the student at the discretion of the receiving school.
- 1.2.5 Truancy citation fees are not subject to fee waivers provisions because truancy citations are similar to repayment for destruction of school property. The school shall provide reasonable and specific options in lieu of payment for truancy citations.
- 1.2.6 The parent shall have the right to appeal a truancy citation in writing to the principal within ten (10) days of being issued.
- 1.2.3 Truancy Citation Uniform Fee Schedule

Level	Citation	Maximum Assessment Permitted
1	First	Warning
2	Second	\$10.00
3	Third	15.00
4	Fourth	20.00
5	Fifth or more	25.00

1.3 Minor Excused From School

The Board may excuse a student from attendance if it has received sufficient evidence to support a finding by the Principal that the student is over the age of sixteen (16) and is unable to profit from attendance at school because of inability or a continuing negative attitude toward school regulations and discipline. When a minor is excused from attendance by the Board, a certificate shall be issued by the Principal-Director of Student Services stating that the minor is excused from school attendance for the period specified on the certificate.

2. Policy Dissemination and Review

2.1 A summary of this policy shall be posted in a prominent place in the school. A summary of the policy shall also be published in student registration materials, student employee handbooks, and other appropriate school publications as directed by the North Star Academy Board of Directors.

This policy will be reviewed on an as needed basis.

REFERENCES

<u>Utah Code Ann. §53A-11-101 to 105</u> - Compulsory Education Requirements <u>Utah Code Ann. §§53A-11-901 to 907</u> - School Discipline and Conduct Plans <u>Utah Administrative Rules R277-607</u> - Truancy Prevention

DEFINITIONS

"Absence" means a student's nonattendance at school for one school day or part of one school day.
"Certified mail" means notification sent through the U.S. Post Office, that requires a signature of acceptance for the letter. A signed receipt notifies the sender that the letter was accepted.

"Excused absence" means a student's absence from school for a reason identified by the school or district as reasonable, such as: illness; medical appointments; family emergencies; death of family member or close friend; family activity or travel, consistent with district/school policy.

"Habitual truant" means a school-aged minor who has received more than two truancy citations within one school year from the school in which the minor is or should be enrolled and eight absences without a legitimate or valid excuse or who, in defiance of efforts on the part of school authorities to resolve a student's attendance problem as required under Section 53A-11-103, refuses to regularly attend school or any scheduled period of the school day.

"Truant minor" is any school-age minor who is subject to the state's compulsory education law and who is absent from school without a legitimate or valid excuse.

"Unexcused absence" means a student's absence from school for reasons other than those authorized under this or an individual school's attendance policy.

A "verified absence" is not excused unless it fits with the school/district's definition of excused absence.

Document History

Adopted: December 5, 1995 - Adoption of this policy repeals Attendance and Discipline Sections of policy 5S-401 "Safe Schools Policy"

Revised: February 17, 1998 - Section 10 repealed and replaced with policy 11IR-108 "Student Dress and Grooming Expectations/School Uniform Rules"

Revised: May 2, 2000 - Truancy Intervention section updated to reflect changes in the law.

Revised: October 16, 2001 - Notification of noncustodial parent of illness or injury (4.2.2 and 4.2.3)